

Psalm 51: Recovery from Grievous Sin

For the choir director A melody of David
When Nathan the prophet went in to him,
After he had gone in to Bathsheba

vv1-4: Summary Request

¹Be gracious to me, O God,
according to your lovingkindness;
According to the greatness of your mercy

wipe clean my transgressions.

²Very thoroughly wash/clean me
from my iniquity/sin/guilt
And from my sin

cleanse me.

³For my transgressions I, myself, know;
And my sin is before me continually.

⁴Against You, You alone I have sinned
And the evil in Your sight I have done,
Consequently

You are righteous when You speak—
You are pure when You judge.

vv5-7: Sin and Inner Cleansing

⁵Behold! In iniquity/sin I was brought forth/born;
And in sin my mother conceived me
⁶Behold! Truth You have desired/delighted in
in the dark/secret *innermost self(?)*
And in silence/secretcy

wisdom you will make me know

⁷Purify me with hyssop, and I will be clean;
Wash me, and more than snow I will be white.

vv8-12: Joy and Fellowship with God

⁸You will make me hear
joy and jubilation
They will shout in celebration,

the bones You have broken

⁹Hide Your face
from my sins
And all my iniquities

wipe clean.

¹⁰A pure heart create in me, O God
And a steadfast spirit renew within me

¹¹Do not send me out
from Your presence
And Your Holy Spirit

do not take from me!

¹²Restore to me
the joy of Your salvation
And (with a) spirit of steadfastness

You will sustain me.

vv13-17: Teaching and Worship

¹³I will teach transgressors Your ways (roads),
And sinners to You will return/turn.

¹⁴Save me from blood-guiltiness, O God, God of my salvation!
It will joyfully sing, my tongue, Your righteousness.

¹⁵O Lord, my lips You will open up,
And my mouth will announce Your glory.

¹⁶For You will not delight
in sacrifice, or I would give it;
In burnt offering

you do not take pleasure.

¹⁷*The sacrifices of God*
are a spirit that has been shattered/broken;
A heart that has been shattered/broken and crushed
O God, You will not despise.

vv18-19: Concluding Blessing on Zion

¹⁸Do good in Your good pleasure *to Zion*;
You will build *the* walls of Jerusalem!

¹⁹Then You will take pleasure in sacrifices of righteousness,
burnt offering, and whole burnt offering;
Then they will offer up on Your altar young bulls.